excessive rains would all go off into the ditches, and every part of the work was done with mathematical precision that astonished me. When I questioned friend Bannehr he replied:

"Yes, they have in one sense made a wonderful success of that celery farm. I think it is generally admitted it is one of the finest in the state; but they spend a pile of money doing it. Clearing out the big trees, bushes, roots, clumps, and all, cost a lot, the ditching a big sum more, and, after that, hundreds of dollars have been spent on fertilizers to produce this magnificent growth. It now only remains to see if they can sell the crop for enough to pay for all this outlay."

Well, whether it pays or not I am glad somebody has given us an object-lesson that shows what is really possible in the line of "high-pressure gardening." If money must be wasted by experiments, I like to see it wasted in this way. But we are not sure it is wasted. Later on I learned of a man who sold celery from a single acre to the amount of $3,300. This was on Terra Ceia Island, near Bradentown. This island is almost every foot of it, under "high-pressure gardening." Wouldn't this sum warrant a pretty good outlay?

Later, through the kindness of friend Rood and Lathrop (brother of Henry Lathrop), of Bradentown, I saw before in any state in the years ago, when I visited E. B. Rood he was experimenting with strawberries, and a few days ago I found him "still at it." In a region where nobody supposed that strawberries could be grown, until he showed to the contrary. I saw more green and ripe berries on the plants than I ever saw before in any state in the Union—that is, for the size of the plants. In the North, where we plant 2x4 feet, and keep the runners off, of course we have in time immense hills, but here in Florida they plant much closer—2 feet by 8 inches, and, if I am correct, set new plants every year. With this close planting the plants can not be of great size; but the berries on some plants literally hid the foliage. As mulching to keep the berries out of the dirt is a rather hard matter, the most of Friend Rood's three acres is not mulched; but his berries are all carefully washed before being put into baskets. They are then taken right to the fruit stores and sold at once. I was with him when he took in one lot, and his customers were sold out and waiting for his morning installment of fresh berries. Of course, mulching must be followed with berries that are to be shipped. The variety grown mostly by friend Rood is the Excelsior. It is rather tart, but a little sugar fixes that. I asked him how it was that he had the only strawberries in that region. He answered something like this:

"Friend R., the rest of the people have not learned how. I have been years studying and experimenting. I once sent North for 2,000 plants, and did not get a quart of berries from the whole lot. I had so many failures I was about to give up, and should have done so had it not been for my wife. I think I could now grow strawberries anywhere in Florida."

Now, friends, there are two or three big morals in that speech. His good wife had more sense and grit than he had, and the trouble with a whole lot of you is, you have not any wives.

Again he (and his wife) learned the trade by slow and gradual steps just as my friends the Wright Bros. learned how to fly. (I have got a lot to tell you about them soon. They have sold to the French nation the right to France, but not to the whole United States, as many of the papers have it.

Friend Rood has done the same with peaches as with strawberries, and the peaches are so fine he sells his whole crop in strawberry boxes at 10 cents per quart in his home market. I saw more peaches on one tree than I ever saw in the North. This year the tree got puzzled to know when to bloom, and they commenced in December, and have kept it up more or less until now, consequently he has peaches of all sizes on the same tree, and blossoms too. Some of the fruit is nearly the size of an egg, and some just out of bloom. With his nice double-seated buggy and big stout horse he took us all over the suburbs of the brisk and growing county-seat of Manatee county. Bradentown has grown so much in six years I should never have recognized it. Out in the suburbs we found guava trees loaded with fruit; some just ripening, Feb. 14. We found also loquat, or Japan plums, loaded with luscious ripe fruit; oranges, grapefruit, kumquats, etc., were so plentiful I hardly need mention them.

When a friend and I walked up from the railroad station we found our overcoats and grip rather burdensome, and I suggested we leave them until we hunted up Mr. Rood, at a baker-shop near by. As we opened the door to go out I thought the proprietor's face looked familiar. Sure enough, it was my old friend Trueblood, who used to be a bee-keeper, and took Gleanings years ago. Well, friend T. and his good wife have built up quite a business in the growing town, and one of their specialties is a 15-cent lunch—coffee, sandwich, and a little pie. Should you ever go there, tell them you want a 5-cent pineapple pie, such as A. I. Root wrote about. When pineapples are plentiful and cheap they put them in cans, and use them for pies as wanted, and I think pineapple is the very best "pie-timber" in the world. The pies are not only delicious, but as they make them, they are wholesome. I know, for every meal I had in Bradentown was at the bakery, and at my special request it was cereal coffee, beef sandwich, and pineapple pie. Mrs. Trueblood was at one time a missionary in Alaska for four years.

In the afternoon, under the guidance and courtesy of W. U. Lathrop, a comfortable carriage with colored driver took us over the truck-farms and orchards round about Palmetto. Our older readers will remember I have always been a good deal of a lettuce crank, but on this trip I saw more acres of lettuce than I ever saw before in my life. There are not only acres, but miles of lettuce. It seemed to me there could hardly be people enough, who love lettuce, in the whole United States to take all this great crop. But I was still more astonished to learn that just now, owing to the large amount that was drowned out by the excessive rains in December and January, the price is away up. It is packed in tall basket-looking crates, holding about one and one-half bushels, and the demand is such that growers are getting between $5.00 and $6.00 per crate. The variety is Boston Market, or something very near like it, and for fear of a decline in prices, a good deal is being shipped that is not headed up so as to make really first-class heads; but such is the call that growers are surprised at the size of the remittance, and no complaint is made. I am inclined to think the craving for lettuce, celery, etc., in the winter time, is nature's prompting, and that these things are really beneficial, and, may be, ward off the necessity for drugs and doctors.

The best ground for this business is generally covered with a dense growth of trees and underbrush, and that makes it expensive to clear off. One man told us that, to make new land absolutely clean of stumps and everything, all at once, cost just about $100 per acre. The usual plan seems to be, three rows of lettuce, about 18 inches apart, then a two-foot alley. This alley is to give room in planting and gathering the crop, and a horse is also used cultivating in the alley sometimes. Hand cultivators or plows are run in the eighteen-inch spaces. Chemical fertilizers are mainly used, as I suppose stable manure is not to be had. One man makes a shallow furrow between the rows; a second strews in the fertilizer by hand, and a third, with the right kind of hand cultivator, mixes the fertilizer thoroughly with the soil. This past winter has taught pretty well the importance of surface and open-ditch drainage. Few, if any tiles are used, but as there is no frost here to make the sides cave in, the ditches are sliced down with a spade, with very little slope. When weeds are allowed to go to seed it is, of course, quite an expense to keep all the open ditches "open" at all times and seasons. Close cropping is followed when the fertilizers are so expensive. As an illustration, one man remarked, a crop of lettuce was cleaned from a field we were passing through, the day before. I stopped in astonishment, and exclaimed, "Why, my good friend! you surely don't mean from this nice field of wax beans?" "Yes, sir: These beans were planted between the rows of lettuce, and after the lettuce was off and trash cleaned up we ran the cultivator through, and the beans just spread out during the last night so they now cover the ground pretty well, as you see."

To work on this "high-pressure," plan, a ton of fertilizer, costing $30, is often used on a single crop.

Florida cabbage is also away up, owing, we are told, to the fact that the cabbage crop in the North last fall was unusually short. Here in Florida I am told it is no unusual thing at certain seasons to have a five-pound cabbage sell for as much as a five-pound pineapple. Well, I can say from experience that a nice, hard, crisp, Jersey Wakefield cabbage grown here in Florida is about as nice as a pineapple. We saw fields of cabbage so large they almost went away off "out of sight." Cabbage can be grown here only in winter. This truck-farming can not be well carried on very far away from the railroad and steamboat lines, and good roads to the shipping points are almost as necessary. Although much time and money had been spent on the roads, we found them in some places pretty bad; but this was on account of the unusual winter rains. The ditches for drainage are usually along the roadsides, and sometimes these are very deep, ten feet or more, making it expensive for bridges to get into the field. Of course, a rotation of crops is desirable, and they are just finding out that oranges and other citrus fruits often do well on this ground so good for the truck business.

Now, please don't think I am blundering when I tell you we drove through a grapefruit orchard of 222 acres—23,000 trees in all. Of course, this great orchard cost a lot of money. I think the trees are now about eight years old, and although the crops afford a fair interest on the outlay, the owners have not as yet received what it cost them, but the prospect is fair that they soon will. A lemon-orchard we visited later has a still larger acreage.

Now I have a strange story to tell you. It illustrates how possible it is in this world of ours to find that, through God's wisdom and providence, our enemies may prove eventually to be our best friends in disguise. Most of you have heard of the white fly that ruins orange orchards and other stuff almost the world over. Of late it has been geting into greenhouses in the North, and, unlike the "green fly," tobacco fumes and stems do not seem to trouble it. Well, greenhouse men and gardeners have also been troubled during damp weather with snails, and there has been much talk in our florists' journals as to how to get rid of them. One writer said the best or only way was to hand-pick them at night, with a lantern—they work only at night. In some countries, we are told, snails are such choice delicacies for food they are worth their weight in gold. Well, various birds also consider them choice morsels, and this is why the poor snails dare not venture out by daylight. Now let us go back to the white fly.

This insect does not eat the orange leaves to do any particular harm, but, of humanity. From a small begining like all family of aphides, it exudes, when feeding a sweet substance called by bee-keepers "honey-dew." This sticky stuff covers the orange leaves so they can not breathe, and finally gives sustenance to a black, tarry-looking fungus that coats the leaves and injures if not kills the tree. Well, Mr. F. D. Waite and one other good man whose name I have lost, discovered about simultaneously, that a Florida snail, if given a chance, would go all over an orange tree and lick the leaves and branches all off clean of this sooty mold or fungus. All you need to do to "pass them round," is to throw a piece of burlap or phosphate-sack across the limbs or crotch of the tree. The snails can hide under this cover during the day, so the birds can not get them, and here they multiply prodigiously. We saw them by the dozens and hundreds clinging to the orange limbs. They with their shells, are about the size of beans. You can pull them from one tree and carry them to another, where they will stay if you give them a sack covering for protection. In fact, they will of themselves go from tree to tree if they can find the shelter from the birds and other enemies. So eager are the people to avail themselves of this great discovery that Mr. Waite told us they were stealing his snails at such a rate he didn't know but a watch would have to be kept all through their extensive lemon-groves. Scientific men have been sent from the Florida Experiment Station, and just recently the department at Washington is investigating, and their verdict so far is to the effect that the despised snail is going to bless the whole of Florida by giving the citrus groves a good old-fashioned "house-cleaning."

Auburndale, Fla., Feb. 5, 1905.

Mr. E. O. Painter,
Jacksonville, Fla.,

Dear Sir:

We have sent a sample box of oranges to Mr. Wamoolt as instructed in your circular to compete for your Simon Pure Prize. Greatly to the surprise of many, our grove has gone through the freeze uninjured. It being as nice and green now as before the freeze. We are telling people that it is because we use your fertilizer, and that it being in good condition has stood the cold wave while many near us will lose all the leaves from the trees.

Yours very truly,
E. B. Redfield.

CHEAP COLUMN

RATES—Twenty words, name and address, one week, 25c.; three weeks, 50c.